

Advocating for water and sanitation for all and forever





Photo: Dhading: Citizens' action programme model district

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Acronyms

CBO	Community Based Organisation
CDO	Chief District Officer
DDC	District Development Committee
DWSS	Department of Water Supply and Sewerage
FAN	Freshwater Action Network
FEDWASUN	Federation of Drinking Water and Sanitation Users Nepal
GCAP	Global Call for Action Against Poverty
GB	Great Britain
INGO	International Non Governmental Organisation
LDO	Local Development Officer
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NAFNR	National Advocacy Forum for Natural Resources
NEWAH	Nepal Water for Health
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NPC	National Planning Commission
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VDC	village development committee
WAN	WaterAid in Nepal
WATSAN	Water and Sanitation

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Federation of Drinking Water and Sanitation Users Nepal (FEDWASUN) is a people-based umbrella organisation of drinking water and sanitation users' groups in Nepal. It facilitates the provision of drinking water and sanitation (WATSAN) services to communities, advocates for water and sanitation rights ('water for all and forever'), brings people's issues to the attention of policy makers and service providers, and promotes good governance in relation to both users' committees/groups and service providers.

Since its inception, FEDWASUN has actively supported its members by advocating for sustainable policies and programmes in the water and sanitation sector. In coordination with the Government of Nepal, I/NGOs, CBOs, donors and civil society, FEDWASUN helps to engender solidarity among users' groups to resolve issues in the WATSAN sector. At present, FEDWASUN is focusing its advocacy efforts on the equitable, transparent and justifiable distribution of services to users and encouraging the meaningful participation of beneficiaries, including men and women, the poor, and marginalised and disadvantaged groups. FEDWASUN believes that users are the managers of the water and sanitation system and that they have the right to make decisions about every aspect of water and sanitation schemes.

1.2 Genesis of FEDWASUN

In Nepal, many actors (the Government, I/NGOs, civil society, CBOs and the private sectors) are involved in promoting water supply and sanitation schemes. There are also thousands of water and sanitation users' committees/groups involved in the operation and maintenance of water and sanitation projects at the local

level. However, most of the schemes are not sustainable and most users' groups face multi-dimensional problems at the policy and implementation levels. These problems include lack of awareness, lack of resource management capacity and lack of good governance, both within the community and by government authorities and other implementing bodies.

The lack of a single organisation at the national level to advocate for users' rights meant that many important issues, both policy and practices, were unheard by the Government. There was a need for an organised forum to bring all users' groups together to promote good governance and sustainability in the water and sanitation sector in Nepal. It was anticipated that such a forum could advocate for users' rights, facilitate the formation of user-friendly policies, and promote schemes to meet the needs of poor and marginalised people.

To promote the concept of a federation in the WATSAN sector, Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH), with the support of WaterAid Nepal (WAN), conducted preparatory exercises starting in December 2001. A series of consultation meetings were organised within NEWAH's five regional offices and

WAN to develop clarity and understanding about the concept of federation building, define roles, and create a space for the project in the sector. In addition, workshops on federation building were organised at the district level involving users' committees, local bodies, the Government, NGOs and other concerned stakeholders. The feedback from these workshops further justified the need for a water and sanitation federation, both at the district and national level, to bring all of the water and sanitation users' groups under one umbrella, to be a strong voice for the users. The need for a federation for the independent monitoring and social auditing of drinking water and sanitation projects is also acknowledged by the Government of Nepal in its Rural Water Supply and Sanitation National Policy and Strategy 2004.

In July 2002, NEWAH conducted a primary workshop on federation building for participants from Dhading district representing different water and sanitation stakeholders. After information sharing and discussions, a nine-person coordination committee was formed from among the participants. The Coordination Committee decided to set up a contact office in Dhading and a plan was drafted regarding the sharing of information with respect to office staff, corresponding with and informing users' groups, and the sharing responsibilities. The participants

also discussed coordinating with village development committees (VDCs) and organising a second workshop at the national level.

Following this, a preparatory meeting was held by NEWAH headquarters to extend the federation building process at the district level. Initially, planning was done to select one district from each of the five development regions. Five districts were chosen: Udayapur (Eastern Development Region), Dhading (Central Development Region), Baglung (Western Development Region), Dang (Mid-Western Development Region) and Baitaidi (Far-Western Development Region). A series of workshops were held on, 'District Drinking Water and Sanitation Support: Implementing Agencies and Stakeholders' in each of the selected districts and a district level committee was formed from among the participants.

As a result, the Federation of Drinking Water and Sanitation Users Nepal (FEDWASUN) was established in August 2003 (B.S. 2060 Bhadra 10) and officially registered at the Kathmandu District Administration Office on 10 May 2004. Since then, FEDWASUN has grown to be an umbrella organisation for 1,258 user groups, which have reached more than 1,50,000 families in 33 districts of Nepal. Since its inception, FEDWASUN has been actively implementing the following vision, mission, goal and objectives.

1.3 Vision

FEDWASUN's vision is to be known nationally and internationally as a capable, strong network representative and a lead organisation for drinking water and sanitation users' groups throughout Nepal. (FEDWASUN Brochure, 2005)

1.4 Mission

FEDWASUN's mission is to protect the rights of drinking water and sanitation users' organisations throughout Nepal by raising their awareness, and

organising and empowering them to attain their additional rights, and by advocating for access to policy framing and decision-making. FEDWASUN success will be based on inclusive participation with all stakeholders working together to ensure the availability and sustainability of drinking water and sanitation. (FEDWASUN Brochure, 2005)

1.5 Goal

FEDWASUN's goal is to enhance the self-reliance capacity of water and sanitation users' groups to influence policy making, planning and decision-making processes through meaningful participation, and to ensure sustainable water and sanitation capacity throughout Nepal. (FEDWASUN Constitution, 2004)

1.6 Objectives

The overall objectives of FEDWASUN, as described in its Constitution, are to:

- ▶ Unify drinking water and sanitation users' organisations by facilitating the exchange of knowledge, skills and experiences, building a culture of mutual assistance and goodwill.
- ▶ Establish interrelationships between local, district and national level organisations for their mutual benefit.
- ▶ Carry out a coordinated campaign of monitoring and evaluation to ensure sustainable, good quality and safe drinking water and sanitation.
- ▶ Correct the procedural or practical blockage seen in government policies, laws and programmes by taking up these matters at the policy-making level and drawing the attention of concerned government organisations to unclear or ambiguous policies, laws and programmes and their unintended results.
- ▶ Help to establish a relationship and coordination between the Government of Nepal and users' organisations and build their capacity.
- ▶ Establish necessary coordination and partnerships with local bodies, I/NGOs and other concerned

stakeholders for the benefit of the Federation and users' organisations.

- ▶ Inform drinking water and sanitation users' organisations about the traditional, national and international laws on drinking water and sanitation.
- ▶ Develop the Federation as a responsible and capable representative organisation for the drinking water and sanitation users' groups in Nepal and ensure its sustainability. (FEDWASUN Constitution, 2004)

1.7 Working methodology

In order to achieve the above vision, mission, goal and objectives while placing its core values at the heart of its work, FEDWASUN's Constitution describes the following working methodologies:

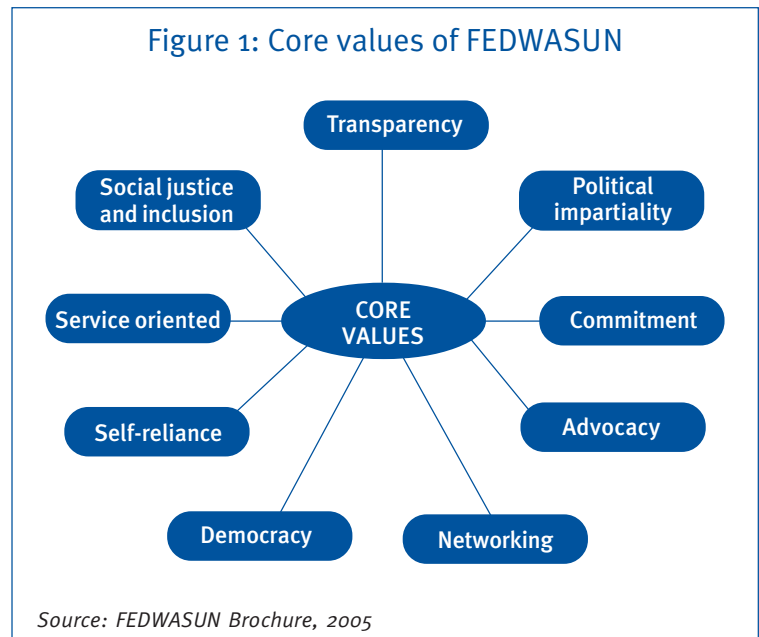
- ▶ Organise technical, skills-based, awareness raising and legal trainings, workshops, meetings, gatherings and visits that are necessary to build the capacity of drinking water and sanitation users' organisations and various units of this Federation.
- ▶ Implement awareness campaigns on sanitation, environmental balance and cleanliness from local to national level and protect people's right to quality drinking water.
- ▶ Provide support as a mediator to resolve personal disputes that arise between the drinking

water and sanitation users' organisations and assist organisations that face legal and policy level issues.

- ▶ Improve the institutional capacity of users' organisations and encourage them to practise good governance, social justice, gender sensitivity, inclusive participation and common consensus.
- ▶ Maintain necessary relationships with the Government and various concerned organisations and exchange support, advice and suggestions.
- ▶ Carry out various activities necessary and favourable for drinking water and sanitation users' organisations to achieve their goals and objectives.
- ▶ Take approval from Government, donors and other concerned stakeholders before implementing programmes and coordinate with them to implement programmes according to FEDWASUN's goals and working modalities. (FEDWASUN Constitution, 2004)

1.8 Core Values

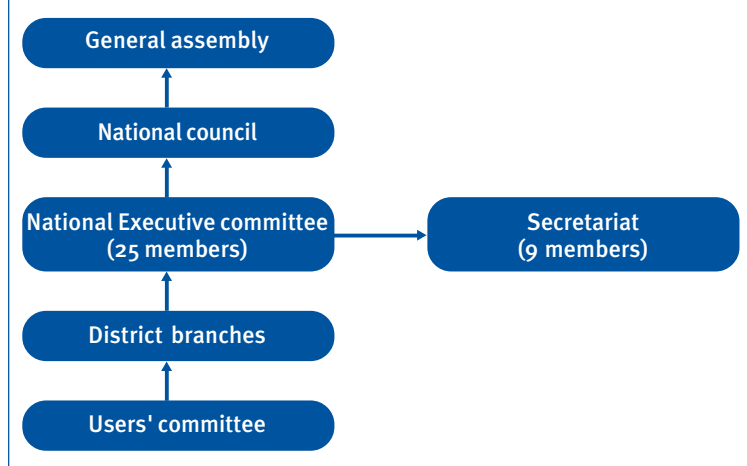
FEDWASUN has the following core values:



1.9 Governance Structure

FEDWASUN's Constitution (2004) provides a framework for its governance. For the effective operation of the Federation, the Constitution provides for the formation of a General Assembly, National Council, National Executive Committee, Secretariat, district branches and users' groups. According to its Constitution, FEDWASUN is an apex body for water and sanitation users in Nepal, under which branches are to be formed in each district. Each branch of the Federation is a collective representation of water and sanitation users' groups at the grassroots level. Each users' group represents the beneficiaries of water and sanitation services in each particular location. According to their roles and responsibilities, FEDWASUN's Central Office, district branches and users' groups are accountable for executing regular works, guided by the Secretariat, National Executive Committee, National Council and General Assembly. FEDWASUN's organisational structure is displayed below.

Figure 2: Organisational structure of FEDWASUN



1.9.1 General assembly

According to FEDWASUN's Constitution, the General Assembly takes place once every four years. The General Assembly is the overall management body that plans FEDWASUN's future activities, amends the Constitution if necessary, selects the members of the National Executive Committee, executes the functions of the National Council, and discusses and decides on other vital issues. The General Assembly contains representatives from each district branch. The number of participants in the General Assembly is determined by the number of users' groups in each district, as shown in Figure 3.

The General Assembly also includes the National Executive Committee's executives and members, representatives from the Government, I/NGO's, civil society, advisors and other people listed by the National Executive Committee who are able to make a meaningful contribution.

Figure 3: Composition of general assembly

Number of users' groups	Male participants	Female participants	Total*
1-20	1	1	2
21-50	2	2	4
Above 51	3	3	6

1.9.2 National council

The National Council is the second most vital body in FEDWASUN and its assembly takes place every year. The National Council is held together with the General Assembly every four years. The National Council provides strategic direction and approval for programmes and budgets submitted by the National Executive Committee. It also appoints auditors and discusses and decides on proposals and other agreements. The Council is composed of one male and one female representative from each district, executives and members of the National Executive Committee and other contributors from the Government, I/NGO s, CBOs and civil society.

1.9.3 National executive committee

The National Executive Committee is composed of 20 members elected at the General Assembly; two males and two females from each development region. An additional five members are nominated to represent people from remote areas and marginalised groups (women, Dalits, indigenous peoples and disadvantaged groups). The main function of this committee is to perform all activities as directed by the National Council and the General Assembly. With permission from the National Council, it formulates, implements and amends rules, regulations and



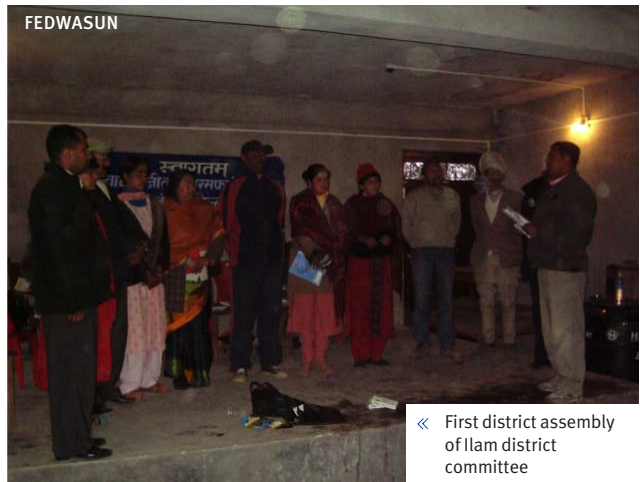
FEDWASUN

« Naumule users committee meeting



FEDWASUN

« First district assembly of Makwanpur district committee



FEDWASUN

« First district assembly of Ilam district committee



FEDWASUN

« FEDWASUN Kaski district committee formation meeting



FEDWASUN

« First district assembly of Baglung district committee



WaterAid / Anita Pradhan

« Commitments to people: first general assembly of FEDWASUN



FEDWASUN

« Dhading district committee members

policies for staff, administration and the organisation as a whole. It is mandatory for the National Working Committee to meet at least three times a year to develop a strategic organisational direction.

1.9.4 Permanent secretariat

The Secretariat was created to perform the day-to-day and administrative activities of the General Assembly. The Secretariat is under the direction of the National Executive Committee and is responsible for implementing, monitoring and evaluating annual programmes, preparing annual budgets, opening bank accounts, and managing financial and human resources. The committee consists of nine members: President, Vice-president, Member Secretary, Treasurer and five other members. Committee meetings are held as needed. Of the four vital positions, women must fill two and it is mandatory to have 50% women on this committee.

1.9.5 District branches

With the permission of local authorities, district branches shall be formed in each target district of Nepal. Each district branch will have a district branch committee composed of a minimum of nine to a maximum of fifteen members. As with the Secretariat, out of the four vital positions, women must fill two and the overall representation of women must be 50%. The district branch committees also incorporate members from remote locations and marginalised groups. The district branches are responsible for registering with the district water resource committee, identifying different service providers, coordinating and networking with other organisations, registering water and sanitation users' groups, and implementing, monitoring and evaluating WATSAN programmes in their district.

1.9.6 Users' committees

Water and sanitation users' committees are formed at the grassroots level to represent different communities.

The composition of users' committees is similar to that of district branch committees in terms of number, gender and ethnic balance. Water and sanitation users' committees are formulated for the smooth operation, maintenance and monitoring of water and sanitation schemes and to ensure that local communities have access to such schemes. These grassroots committees are responsible for bringing issues, problems and social disputes to service providers and making the community's voice heard.

In practice, most of the users' groups are incapable of bringing issues to the attention of service providers. They are not usually knowledgeable about the schemes and budgets allocated to their VDC and are never given an opportunity to plan, monitor and decide on their own development needs. This trend does not contribute to project sustainability and effectiveness. Thus, FEDWASUN and its district branches are directing their efforts towards registering these committees with the Federation and empowering them to advocate for and bring about change in their communities to ensure safe and free access to water and sanitation schemes. These users' groups must be registered with the district water resource committee or the concerned district level

body before they are eligible for membership of FEDWASUN.

The Rural Water Supply and Sanitation National Policy and Strategy 2004 also recognises the importance of users' committees at the grassroots level. The RWSS National Policy and Strategy 2004 has committed to registering users' groups under the Water Resource Act 1992 and Drinking Water Regulation 1998, and to empowering them in terms of the planning, operation, maintenance and monitoring of water and sanitation schemes. The RWSS National Strategy and Policy 2004 also highlights the need for geographic, ethnic and gender balance to enhance equity in the WATSAN sector.

1.10 Organisational setup and human resources

FEDWASUN is a volunteer organisation. It has a central level office at Thapathali in Kathmandu. Even though FEDWASUN has branches in 33 districts, only some of the districts have major

programmes with permanent offices. The central office coordinates with its district branch offices and field contacts to implement programmes.

At FEDWASUN's central office, the National President, Secretary and Treasurer deal with day-to-day office operations. There are three paid staff: programme officer, accountant and office assistant. WAN has been supporting FEDWASUN's central office operations and organisational strengthening.

1.11 Financial resources

FEDWASUN depends on both internal and external sources for its financial resources. Its main source of internal capital is users' committee registration fees and renewal fees. Each users' committee has to pay NRs.300 for registration and NRs 100 annually for renewal. Forty percent of registration and annual fees are allocated to the district branch and 60% to FEDWASUN's central office.

Externally, FEDWASUN seeks funding from different donors, the Government and other agencies within the boundaries of FEDWASUN's norms and values. FEDWASUN's financial resources are managed and operated in a transparent way. FEDWASUN is required to conduct an annual audit within a month of the end of each fiscal year. The audit and the audit report must be conducted by a registered auditor appointed by the National Council. The audit report must be submitted to the Social Welfare Council and other concerned bodies.

1.12 National coverage and expansion strategy

FEDWASUN is a growing organisation. Within half a decade of establishment it has expanded its branch offices to 33 districts in 5 development regions (Figure 6). FEDWASUN is currently engaged in strengthening its district branches and implementing programmes to contribute to its mission and vision. Its long-term strategy is to expand its branches to all 75 districts of Nepal.

Only by expanding its branches to all districts can FEDWASUN ensure sustainable and effective WATSAN services to all of the citizens of Nepal. For this, it aims to empower locally established users' groups by building their capacity and registering them with district level bodies. It is FEDWASUN's belief that the legitimisation and strong networking of district branches will contribute to development and poverty alleviation in the Nepal.

1.13 Networking, alliances and partnerships

Initially, NEWAH and WAN supported the establishment and institutional development of FEDWASUN. However, during the course of time, FEDWASUN has developed many direct and indirect relationships with various other organisations.

1.13.1 Memberships

Freshwater Action Network (FAN)

Freshwater Action Network is a global network of environmental and developmental non-governmental and community based organisations working to strengthen civil society participation in international water policy. FEDWASUN became a member of its

South Asian Chapter in January 2008. FEDWASUN's President is one of the focal persons of FAN's interim committee, South Asian Chapter.

Global Call for Action against Poverty (GCAP)

FEDWASUN became a secretariat member of the Nepal Chapter of the Global Call for Action against Poverty (GCAP) in 2005. GCAP is a common platform for 33 non-government agencies and federations in Nepal to advocate and lobby for poverty alleviation. FEDWASUN has provided input to the review of Nepal's progress towards the MDGs by participating in delegations, meetings, rallies and other related events. The Chairperson of FEDWASUN participated in the international conference Bada na Todo Abhiyan (Don't Break the Promise Movement) in Delhi in April 2005.

National Advocacy Forum for Natural Resources (NAFNR)

FEDWASUN is a founding member of the National Advocacy Forum for Natural Resources, Nepal, 2006. It is a forum established to advocate for people's rights in relation to water, forests and land. FEDWASUN has been participating in this forum's vital programmes in relation to water.



« FEDWASUN representative in Freshwater Action Network, South Asia Regional Consultation and Planning meeting



« FEDWASUN representatives from different districts participating orientation programme



« FEDWASUN representative participating in WaterAid Asia Regional Advocacy Meeting held in Bangladesh



WaterAid/ Anita Pradhan

« FEDWASUN representative participating in Media Training held in Pakistan



WaterAid/ Anita Pradhan

« FEDWASUN representative participating in WaterAid Asia Regional Budget Advocacy Training

Figure 4: FEDWASUN's functional relationships with government bodies

Government sector	Type of functional relationship
National Planning Commission (NPC)	Mostly one-way proposals from FEDWASUN, which have not been seriously considered by the NPC
Ministry of Physical Planning and Works	Policy level
Ministry of Local Development (district development committee, village development committee, municipality)	Joint activities (e.g., monitoring, the celebration of National Sanitation Week) and two-way invitations to important events and meetings
Department of Water and Sewerage	Policy level and practice (e.g., joint activities and participation in different events and meetings)
Parliamentary Committee on Natural Resources and Development Committee	Interaction for water resource allocation and provision

Steering Committee for National Sanitation Action, Nepal

FEDWASUN is a Steering Committee Member of Steering committee for National Sanitation Action, Nepal, which was established in 1998. As such, it has been monitoring National Sanitation Action Week activities annually in different districts of Nepal. During monitoring, FEDWASUN's officials observed and attended programmes, interacted with district level officials and clarified the vision and mission of FEDWASUN with water and sanitation users' groups and other concerned agencies.

District Water Resource Committee

FEDWASUN is a member of the District Water Resource Committees in Baitadi, Pyuthan, Baglung, Dhading, Ilam and Surkhet districts. As a member, FEDWASUN takes part in all important meetings and events. FEDWASUN advocates for the proper allocation of water resources through this forum.

National Drinking Water Quality Control Committee

FEDWASUN became a member of the National Drinking Water Quality Control Committee in 2008.

1.13.2 Partnerships and relationships

Government sector

The Government of Nepal has gradually recognised the importance of FEDWASUN's role in the WATSAN sector. Accordingly, FEDWASUN's relationship with different government bodies has grown.

I/NGOs and donors

FEDWASUN is working in partnership with WaterAid in Nepal, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Oxfam GB in 18 districts of Nepal. Its major programmes and details are elaborated in the following chapter.

2 Major programmes

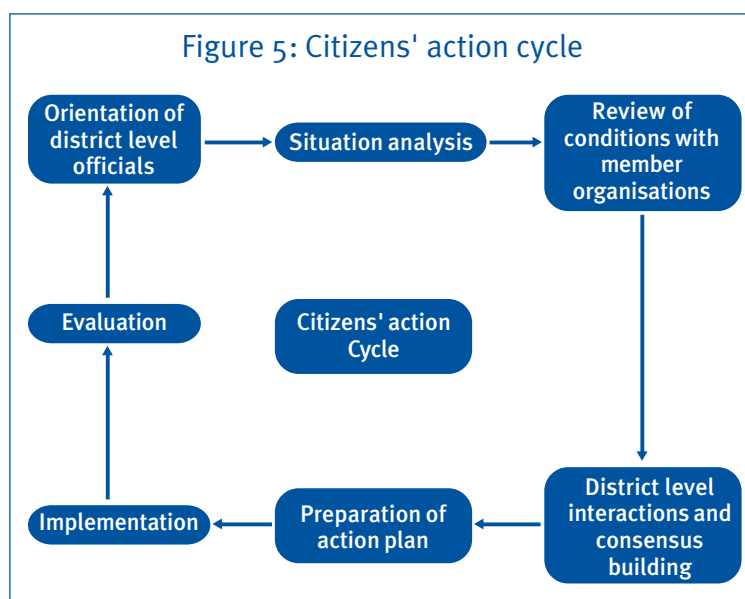
Since its establishment, FEDWASUN has been addressing development needs in the WATSAN sector by initiating and executing different kinds of activities. FEDWASUN has conducted many programmes to raise awareness, improve governance and deliver services in the WATSAN sector. Through the study and analysis of water and sanitation users' groups and past schemes, FEDWASUN has been able to identify different issues and help users resolve problems, both at the grassroots and at the policy level. In coordination with district level stakeholders, FEDWASUN celebrates National Sanitation Week every year and conducts various trainings and public hearing programmes. Currently, FEDWASUN is carrying out the following major programmes in 33 districts of Nepal.

2.1 Citizens' action programme

2.1.1 Overview

Since April 2005, FEDWASUN in coordination with WaterAid Nepal has been implementing the Citizens' action programme in Dhading, Baglung, Makwanpur, Ilam, Pyuthan, Baitadi, Dang, Gulmi districts. A multi-

year plan has been developed for the Citizens' action programme. The main objective of the programme is to improve water and sanitation governance (responsiveness, equity, accountability and transparency) through citizens' action and budget tracking, helping to make service providers accountable, responsive and ensuring that they provide services in a sustainable and equitable manner. Through effective advocacy, the programme aims to identify and analyse water and sanitation issues, and advocate for appropriate action at all levels (VDC, DDC and national). The programme encourages communities to take ownership of their own development work through active participation in identifying issues, planning, implementing, evaluating and monitoring projects in a transparent and accountable way (Figure 5). In this way the programme helps to encourage meaningful participation by all, including marginalised groups, in the decision-making process. This engagement helps bridge the gap between service providers and beneficiaries.



2.1.2 Major activities

The major activities of the Citizens' action programme are:



« Citizen action programme orientation to FEDWASUN Dhading District Committee members



« Citizen action programme orientation to FEDWASUN Baglung District Committee members



« Citizen action programme orientation to FEDWASUN Ilam District Committee members



« Citizen action programme orientation to FEDWASUN Makwanpur District Committee members



« Celebrating National Sanitation Action Week



« FEDWASUN Baitadi: Community participating in consultations

- » Status review of water and sanitation situation through interactions and orientation training for district branch members on legal aspects of water and sanitation and governance
- » Collection of issues through direct interaction with users' groups in different districts
- » Analysis of the WATSAN budget for the last five years and fund utilisation monitoring
- » Monitoring of the implementation of the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation National Policy and Strategy 2004
- » Participatory analysis and prioritisation of issues
- » Presentation of users' evidence-based issues to district level service providers through an interactive workshop
- » Participatory preparation of action plans with representatives of water and sanitation users' committees and service providers
- » Implementation of action plans in close coordination with FEDWASUN district branches
- » Monitoring of implementation of action plans through periodical/annual review meetings and field visits

2.2 Users' empowerment and support programme

2.2.1 Overview

With UNICEF's support, FEDWASUN has been implementing the Users' Empowerment and Support Programme in Panchthar, Udayapur, Tanahun, Nawalparasi and Kavre districts since August 2006. The main objective of this programme is to support the expansion of the district branch in Panchthar and the registration and empowerment of users' committees in all five programme districts.

2.2.2 Major activities

The major activities of the Users' Empowerment and Support Programme are:

- » Selection of 10 VDCs for the programme and legitimisation of users' groups as per the provisions

of the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation National Policy and Strategy 2004

- » Formation of FEDWASUN district branch in Panchthar district
- » Collection of baseline data and reporting to identify activities to enhance the capacity of users' groups
- » Classification, prioritisation planning and proposal of activities to stakeholders for implementation in the coming year
- » Provision of water users' committee management training to 40 different users' groups, 8 in each district
- » Facilitation of the formation, activation and registration of 500 users' groups (100 in each district) under the District Resource Act

2.3 Expansion and empowerment of WATSAN users' committee programme

2.3.1 Overview

Oxfam GB has been supporting FEDWASUN to implement the Expansion and Empowerment of WATSAN Users' Committee Programme in Surkhet, Dailekh, Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur districts of Nepal since March 2007. The programme aims to create awareness of drinking water and sanitation issues

through FEDWASUN district branches by encouraging the participation of a maximum number of women. Nepal is a patriarchal society and women face more problems than men in relation to water and sanitation, hence, the focus of the programme is on women's empowerment. The programme believes that the empowerment of women can have a multiplier effect within the family and society in terms of creating awareness and handling water and sanitation problems efficiently. The programme also disseminates information on water and sanitation issues, problems and possible solutions.

2.3.2 Major activities

The major activities of the Expansion and Empowerment of WATSAN Users' Committee Programme are:

- » Mobilising and gathering district water and sanitation users' groups to be members of FEDWASUN district chapters
- » Coordination of stakeholders' meetings to discuss water and sanitation plans and issues

- » Provision of advocacy training focusing on institutional development, gender, leadership, capacity building advocacy, resource management and governance, and introduction of FEDWASUN to the district branch committee members
- » Dissemination of information to users' groups on drinking water and sanitation issues and solutions
- » Encouraging water and sanitation users' groups to conduct situation analysis/case studies
- » Provision of orientation on different aspects of water and sanitation to users' groups
- » National level workshops for district level representatives (e.g., on the role of stakeholders in operation and maintenance)

2.4 District branches improvement programme

FEDWASUN has been working to improve the district branches of the Federation in Dhankuta, Khotang, Jhapa, Morang, Sunsari, Ramechhap, Sindhuli, Partbat, Myagdi, Gulmi, Rupandehi, Kaski, Lamjung, Dang, Dadeldhura, Darchula and Doti districts of Nepal by building their institutions and expanding users' groups. Even though these districts do not have regular programmes, district branches celebrate National Sanitation Week, participate in the General Assembly and National Council, and participate in trainings, workshops and other activities related to water and sanitation.

3 Achievements and lessons

3.1 Achievements

Not even a decade after its establishment, the Federation of Drinking Water and Sanitation Users Nepal is recognised as an umbrella organisation for users' groups involved in the sustainable operation and maintenance of drinking water and sanitation projects in Nepal. The existence of FEDWASUN is well acknowledged by the Government, line agencies, donors, I/NGOs, CBOs, civil society and other stakeholders. Its success has attracted the attention of partner organisations and donors interested in working with FEDWASUN.

Through its activities, FEDWASUN has shown that good governance is necessary for the achievement of sustainable water and sanitation services. FEDWASUN believes that good governance can only emerge when stakeholders engage and participate with each other in an inclusive, transparent and accountable manner to accomplish sustainable services within the rule of law. Thus, FEDWASUN is promoting activities that support good governance. Its major achievements are summarised in the following sections.

3.1.1 Enhancing transparency

In accordance with its Constitution, FEDWASUN has been working to enhance transparency in the WATSAN sector through different programmes. It is difficult for citizens in Nepal to obtain information from WATSAN service providers freely and directly, even though it is the citizens who are directly affected by the decisions that service providers make. FEDWASUN has recognised citizens' right to information and is coordinating with different service providers to ensure that all citizens, including poor and marginalised groups, can have fair access to water and sanitation services and information.

To promote transparency in relation to the allocation of funds and the administration of the WATSAN budget, FEDWASUN recently undertook a budget analysis (Sector and Local Financing Study) as part of its Citizens' action programme. As part of the study, FEDWASUN collected and analysed five years of budget records in the WATSAN sector. These records were obtained from government agencies and other service providers in various districts. FEDWASUN was able to obtain this confidential information due to its trusted position and relationship with service providers and stakeholders in the sector. This budget tracking has helped to create a complete picture of the use of funds in the WATSAN sector by government and non-government projects (both on and off-budget). FEDWASUN hopes that this analysis will help users' groups to ensure the effective use of funds in the sector, plan activities, and prevent corruption and leakages. FEDWASUN's budget analysis is considered a major achievement by sector stakeholders. In the past, local communities were not informed of funds allocated by the Government to their VDC for water and sanitation, and, hence, were unaware of missing funds and corruption. Local communities are

now empowered to ask questions about allocated budgets and make service providers accountable.

In addition, FEDWASUN conducted a Public Hearing Programme, which provided a meaningful arena for citizens, service providers and the Government to discuss service-related issues, investment and reform. Public hearings provide a forum for face-to-face dialogue between different service providers and users' groups, in which the public can directly ask about WATSAN issues such as allocated funds, plans and programmes, implementation failures and other issues. This programme ensures that the poorest members of the community, disadvantaged groups and women have a chance to make their voices heard by the service providers. It also helps to enhance transparency in the WATSAN sector by making service providers more accountable and responsive.

FEDWASUN has also facilitated frequent stakeholders meetings for people holding positions of responsibility in the WATSAN sector. Major participants include the Chief District Officer, Local Development Officer, Chief of District Drinking Water Division, representatives from the DDC, VDC, District Water Resource Committee, users' groups, other service providers, members of civil society and journalists. These interactive discussions have enabled FEDWASUN to resolve many WATSAN issues and disseminate

Figure 7: Budget tracking



When FEDWASUN completed the study on sector and local financing, it held a presentation in Dhading district on budget allocation and investment by the DWSS and DDC over the last five years. Government representatives, members of political parties, and water and sanitation users' groups were present at the meeting. The participants were overwhelmed by the work done by FEDWASUN and praised its initiative.

Budget analysis in Ilam, Dhading, Makwanpur and Baglung districts also revealed that minimal funds were allocated for the repair and maintenance of WATSAN projects. Also, 9 VDCs in Ilam, 7 in Dhading, 13 in Makwanpur and 19 in Baglung were found to have no WATSAN budget at all. This fact was revealed in a stakeholders meeting at which people from responsible institutions were informed of the facts. As a result, some authorities have committed to increase/allocate funds in the WATSAN budget to these VDCs. This analysis has provided FEDWASUN with a rational platform from which to advocate for improvements to WATSAN services and budgets.

information to the community. Stakeholder meetings and public hearings help to boost community interest in the WATSAN sector and build the capacity of communities to fight for their rights through constructive interaction.

Figure 8: FEDWASUN enhancing transparency



Public hearings and stakeholder meetings provide a platform for sharing information and make service providers accountable for and responsive to community needs.

In Dhading District, the Kumpur Drinking Water Scheme was not functioning due to serious technical faults. Local people were spending much time and effort in accessing water from other sources. When FEDWASUN raised the issue and lobbied on behalf of the local people, the authorities were no longer able to ignore the issue. The case was reviewed and the CDO, LDO and Chief of Drinking Water Division made a commitment to survey the scheme and re-start its operation. The information regarding the re-operation and allocated budget was transparently disseminated to the community.

Through the use of media and publications, FEDWASUN is trying to ensure that people are receiving the correct information about WATSAN issues. For instance, FEDWASUN's Dhading chapter is running a media campaign through Radio Dhading. A 15-minute radio programme called *Hamro Boli* (Our Voice) is broadcast twice a week. It includes information on FEDWASUN, water and sanitation rights, local, national

and international information on WATSAN issues, upcoming events, users' groups' analyses, interviews with stakeholders and other issues. Likewise, Radio Ilam is also airing a bi-weekly radio programme on water and sanitation. Similarly, the radio programmes were broadcasted in Makwanpur, Baglung and Pyuthan in 2008. In a short period of time, these programmes have gained a huge following and there is great demand to increase their broadcasting time. Due to this success, FEDWASUN is planning to expand the radio programmes to other district chapters.

FEDWASUN district chapters also use local newspapers to disseminate important information on public hearings, notices, upcoming events, and news related to water and sanitation.

FEDWASUN is also making a concerted effort to collect information on WATSAN issues and to document, publish and disseminate such information to concerned stakeholders. FEDWASUN has already published two issues of a periodic publication called *Aawaj* containing facts, issues and perspectives on the water and sanitation sector.

FEDWASUN has prepared and submitted proceedings, progress reports and other related documents to concerned agencies, including WAN, UNICEF, OXFAM GB and DWSS. FEDWASUN has

Figure 9: Publication: Aawaj



published and publicly distributed various documents including its brochure, calendar and constitution (see Figure 10).

3.1.2 Accountability and responsiveness

FEDWASUN, through its activities, has been successful in enhancing accountability and responsiveness among users' groups and service

providers. Users' groups are formed through a formal process of registration with the District Water Resource Committee. It is mandatory for users' groups to have their legal documents in order and work according to their constitution. FEDWASUN is helping users' groups to gain legitimacy by assisting them with the preparation of a constitution and with registration. These groups are not only responsible for the proper operation and maintenance for their water and sanitation schemes, but also have a duty to bring local perspectives and issues to the service providers. Through critical mass and institutionalised citizen's engagement, FEDWASUN has been able to enhance public accountability, performance and responsiveness in the WATSAN sector.

Through case studies and the monitoring of WATSAN projects, FEDWASUN has been able to analyse the performance of service providers and raise questions about their functionality. This has helped to determine if

Figure 10: FEDWASUN's key documents/publications

List of documents/publications	Language	Date (Nepali calendar)
Sixth National Sanitation Week Report, June 2005	Nepali	2062 BS Ashad
FEDWASUN Constitution and Regulations	Nepali	2061 BS Baishak 28th
Jilla Mahasang Sachetana Gosthi Pratibedhan (Report on District Federation Awareness Workshop) for Dhading, Makwanpur and Kavre Districts	Nepali	2061 BS Chaitra
Karyakram Dastavegh (Programme Document), FEDWASUN	Nepali	2061 BS Chaitra
First National Mahaadibeshan (15-16 Chaitra 2061) Report, FEDWASUN	Nepali	2061 BS Chaitra
Hamro Aawaj Vol 1 - Three monthly	Nepali	2062 BS Paush
Hamro Aawaj Vol 2 - Three monthly	Nepali	2063 BS Mangsir
Monthly Report, April 2005- January 2006	English	
Brochure, FEDWASUN, 2004	Nepali	
Process Document - Institutional Development of FEDWASUN	Nepali	2062 BS Jestha 29th
Programme Document - FEDWASUN	English	
Citizen Voice Report of Makwanpur, Baglung and Dhading Districts	Nepali	
Strategic Planning Document	Nepali	
Nagarik Aawaj Tatha Awastha Adhyan Abhimukhikaran Karyashana, Report (Falgun 2062)	Nepali	
Case Study Report of Ilam, Kavre, Pyuthan, Nawalparasi and Baitadi Districts	Nepali	2062 BS Chaitra

projects are sustainable, and, if not, to develop new strategies to ensure sustainability. The case studies have been very useful for FEDWASUN, not only to advocate and lobby for the rehabilitation and upgrading of existing projects, but also to provide a new direction for upcoming projects. The case studies have helped to put pressure on service providers and decision makers to allocate resources to the most urgent projects.

Figure 11: Growing responsiveness of service providers through FEDWASUN



In 1980, with assistance from UNICEF, the Maichowk Khola Drinking Water Scheme was implemented in Maichowk, Ilam. At that time, the scheme was serving 34 households with 6 taps. After 10 years, the scheme could no longer provide drinking water to the community. The community asked the Department of Drinking Water, Ilam Branch several times to upgrade the scheme with an additional 6 taps. After a year, the problem was still not resolved.

When FEDWASUN's branch was formed in Ilam it conducted a situation analysis of the scheme and put the issue before stakeholders at various meetings. As FEDWASUN was able to prove the need for and urgency of the scheme, the Chief of District Drinking Water Division committed to repairing the structures. This initiative helped 180 people to access drinking water.

FEDWASUN district chapters are actively involved in monitoring ongoing WATSAN projects in the districts. To enhance the accountability of each stakeholder, FEDWASUN has formed joint monitoring committees comprised of representatives from the DDC, Drinking Water Supply Divisional Office and FEDWASUN in Dhading district and is in the process of forming monitoring committees in some other districts.

Through advocacy and lobbying, FEDWASUN has been successful in making community voices heard in national and local level policy debates in the WATSAN sector. In many cases, Citizens' action programmes have been very successful in improving WATSAN governance in terms of responsiveness, equity, accountability and transparency.

In the short period of time since its establishment in 2004, FEDWASUN has been successful in extending its networks at the international, national and local levels and has been able to stand as an accountable and responsive organisation in the WATSAN sector. Locally, FEDWASUN has direct and indirect relationships with VDCs and DDCs in all 33 districts and has been successful in coordinating activities in the districts. For example, Dhading DDC has recently allocated a budget for FEDWASUN to conduct a training programme on community empowerment. FEDWASUN was also invited to

observe the DDC's Annual General Assembly and participated in DDC sector planning. At the national and international level, FEDWASUN has been coordinating with donors, I/NGOs and the government to conduct WATSAN activities. For example, FEDWASUN was invited by the National Planning Commission as a responsive institute and task force member to draft a Three Year Interim Plan on the WATSAN sector.

As good governance includes constructive cooperation between different stakeholders, FEDWASUN is trying to ensure good relationships and mediation between users, service providers and policy makers. All these good practices reflect FEDWASUN's accountability and responsiveness in relation to WATSAN governance and reveal its efforts to empower citizens to fight for their rights and hold policy makers accountable in the WATSAN sector.

3.1.3 Enhancing equity

In Nepal, social inequalities between economic classes, gender, ethnicities and other social groups have impeded the development process. In the water and sanitation sector, the marginalisation of vulnerable people is extensive. FEDWASUN, since its inception, has been trying to ensure that all stakeholders, including the poor and disadvantaged, have an opportunity to influence development decisions that affect

Figure 12: Lobbying exercise at the national level

FEDWASUN, in consultation with other stakeholders, decided to lobby for an increase in the national WATSAN budget. FEDWASUN's national president and a delegation team requested the Finance Minister to increase the budget on 13 June 2007. The Minister accepted the request and thanked the president for providing him with information about FEDWASUN's projects.

FEDWASUN submitted a letter of complaint (dated 20 March 2008) to the Prime Minister, who is also the Chairperson of the National Development Council, for not inviting FEDWASUN to the Council meeting. A copy of this letter was provided the Vice Chairperson of the National Planning Commission.

On World Water Day, 22 March 2008, FEDWASUN handed over 150,000 signatures to Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala. These signatures were collected as part of a nationwide campaign to end water poverty.



their lives, to contribute to development and to share benefits and improve their livelihoods. Thus, FEDWASUN is promoting equity by promoting people's participation in a democratic way.

Women are one of the excluded groups in Nepalese society, and they experience poverty in different ways than men. Women bear a disproportionate burden in relation to water collection from distant sources. FEDWASUN is pushing for the provision of access to safe water supply and appropriate sanitation to save women time and energy, and ensure their security. Improved sanitation services also save women and girls from humiliation and harassment, which they experience when defecating in open spaces.

To overcome gender inequality, FEDWASUN's governance system has been strictly promoting women's participation at the decision-making level by reserving seats for women. In 33 district branch committees, women's participation has already exceeded 50%. Out of the four vital positions of chairperson, vice-chairperson, treasurer and joint-

Figure 13: Reduced drudgery and increased dignity: women enjoying safe sanitation and water facilities



Figure 14: Meaningful engagement of women in the WATSAN sector



secretary, it is mandatory for two to be filled by women.

Likewise, FEDWASUN has also reserved positions in users' groups for disadvantaged members of the community and has been promoting the inclusive composition of Federation membership. This is one of the affirmative actions taken regarding gender equality and social inclusion. Moreover, through different programmes, FEDWASUN is trying to maximise the meaningful engagement of marginalised people in the WATSAN sector.

Provision of water to 660 dalit households

In Chainpur VDC in Dhading District, 606 Dalit households were deprived of drinking water facilities. FEDWASUN lobbied the concerned VDC to construct lifting technology to pull water when electricity came to the village. As a result of this initiative, service providers were made aware of the problem of marginalised people and were forced to take some affirmative action.

This illustrates FEDWASUN's continuous efforts to advocate on behalf of poor and disadvantaged communities, empowering them and increasing their capacity to act and advocate for themselves.

3.1.4 Establishing the rule of law

FEDWASUN has recognised that the rule of law is crucial for sustainable water and sanitation services. Effective water governance starts with good policies and legislative frameworks that protect water resources against exploitation. Hence, FEDWASUN is trying to establish the rule of law in this sector, both in policy and in practice. Unlike the common trend in Nepal, where good policies and rules exist only on paper, FEDWASUN is making a concerted effort to follow its Constitution, and comply with government water policies and regulations. For instance, FEDWASUN's policy places gender equality as a high priority in its governance system; accordingly, FEDWASUN has strictly applied this policy in practice. As a result, women's participation in WATSAN governance has already exceeded 50%.

In order to protect water resource management against exploitation and ensure its sustainable use, FEDWASUN has lobbied the DWRCs to allow its branches to become members. As a result, FEDWASUN's district branches have been successful in obtaining membership and participate in important meetings and events. This process helps to ensure that water resources are fairly and adequately distributed to users' groups. Where resources are not allocated fairly, as a legitimate member of district water resource committees, FEDWASUN can put issues forward strongly to bring justice to the community. FEDWASUN district chapters are also pushing users' groups to establish water resource management in their neighbourhoods and establish the rule of law.

Due to FEDWASUN's effectiveness, it has been invited by various task forces and committees, such as the Human Rights Forum, Journalist Federation, Community Forest Federation, DWSS Division and the DDC, to attend meetings and consultations.

At the grassroots, FEDWASUN is trying to establish management mechanisms by helping users' groups to write their constitutions and become registered with their local bodies. This helps to legitimise community users' groups and gives the community an identity.

Figure 15: Capacity building training

Capacity building

Types of capacity building training that have been provided to FEDWASUN personnel:

- ▶▶ Localising Millennium Development Goal Targets on Water and Sanitation
- ▶▶ Drinking Water and Sanitation as Fundamental Rights
- ▶▶ Gender and Poverty
- ▶▶ Leadership Skills
- ▶▶ Advocacy Training
- ▶▶ Resource Management
- ▶▶ Users' Group Management
- ▶▶ Role of Stakeholders in Operation and Maintenance
- ▶▶ Report Writing
- ▶▶ Governance
- ▶▶ Role of FEDWASUN in WATSAN Sector
- ▶▶ Role of Country in Sanitation Management: International Year of Sanitation 2008

Registration also helps users' groups to function within FEDWASUN's legal framework.

Moreover, to create awareness among users' groups about water laws and the legal aspects of running an organisation in the WATSAN sector, FEDWASUN has been actively involved in organising community awareness programmes and empowering local stakeholders to participate in problem solving, planning and strategic decision making processes. FEDWASUN's attempt to build the capacity of local communities through different trainings has enabled users' groups to articulate their own needs and desires, increased their confidence to influence decisions, and to understand the rule of law and practise it accordingly. The trainings have helped to enhance users' groups' knowledge in different areas and their capacity to distinguish the right or wrong path.

3.1.5 Increasing people's participation

FEDWASUN has been recognised as an institution where people can participate, mediate their interests, exercise their rights and make decisions for the delivery and provision of WATSAN services. FEDWASUN's initiative to enhance people's participation in the WATSAN sector is further highlighted by the recent signature campaign to end water poverty. In this campaign, 150,000 people participated from different districts in Nepal and sent the message to end water poverty by presenting a petition on International Water Day (22 March 2008).

Since 2005, FEDWASUN has been successfully involving people in the celebration of National Sanitation Week. By organising different programmes like rallies, banner displays, street dramas, radio programmes, interactive programmes, essay competitions, drawing competitions and quiz contests, the organisation has promoted the importance of health, hygiene and sanitation and created awareness of water and sanitation issues among the people. As a result of FEDWASUN's initiatives and success in stressing the importance of good sanitation practices through people's participation, communities and users groups have started

incorporating the observation of National Sanitation Week in their annual project plans. Many remote communities have demanded that the district centres allocate funds to celebrate the event.

FEDWASUN has also been actively facilitating people's participation to raise a collective voice for justice. By organising different activities and events, and by sharing experiences, FEDWASUN has

Mediating a social dispute

A dispute on the use of water resource was raised between irrigators and the drinking water users from Adimghat Bansetar Drinking Water Scheme in Dhading. The case was filed at the District Court, but the court could not resolve the case and gave no decision. The issue was again raised in a WATSAN stakeholders meeting and FEDWASUN successfully mediated the case. As a result, both parties came to a consensus to use the scheme for drinking water and, when there was a surplus, to use it for irrigation. FEDWASUN, through dialogue and people's participation, was successful in resolving this social dispute.

Figure16: National sanitation week celebrations

Call for participation in and celebration of National Sanitation Week: Message broadcast by Radio Nepal (8 and 9 May 2005):

"Due to lack of proper water and sanitation provisions around 15,000 children die annually in Nepal. By forming habits to wash hands in proper way and proper time, death of half of these children can be prevented. Thus, it is mandatory to wash hands with soap-water or ash-water before making food, eating food, feeding children and after using toilet. For this, lets participate and raise awareness in the community and make National Sanitation Week (from May 9 to 16 May 2005) a successful event."



a) Raising the awareness of school children by illustrating how to wash your hands with soap



b) Awareness-raising cultural programme



c) Banner to celebrate National Sanitation Week

Figure 17: Increasing participation in the WATSAN sector

Description	Year					
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Number of districts covered	3	5	15	23	26	33
Number of users' group	32	58	240	665	750	1,258
Number of Families	1,920	3,480	14,400	39,900	45,000	60,000

created a platform for people to participate and has built their confidence in demanding their rights. FEDWASUN has also been successful in mediating social disputes and settling them through dialogue and participation.

Moreover, FEDWASUN has been successful in increasing people's participation in the WATSAN sector by expanding its district chapters and users' groups (Figure 17).

All these activities reveal that FEDWASUN, through citizen's participation, has strengthened individuals, as well as communities, and has been able to get communities involved in their own development by addressing actual problems in the local context.

3.1.6 Programme sustainability and effectiveness

Since its establishment, FEDWASUN has been working to make its programmes effective and sustainable. Towards this, FEDWASUN conducted a situation analysis of past water and sanitation schemes to check whether or not the schemes were effective and sustainable. This research became the foundation for

Activating latrines

In Makwanpur, FEDWASUN analysed latrines in Thingan, Sukaura and Gadi VDC and found 108 useless latrines. FEDWASUN, together with the local community, was able to activate 65 latrines and provide better facilities for the citizens.

the organisation's programmes. Through participatory discussions with users' groups, FEDWASUN prioritised projects according to urgency and allocated funds to implement them. FEDWASUN's work in the reactivation of past water schemes has enhanced people's livelihoods in many communities in Nepal.

FEDWASUN has studied the status of users' groups and analysed their functionality at the community level. FEDWASUN has also played a dynamic role in activating passive users' groups and forming new groups. This process has helped instil community ownership in the users' groups and encouraged them to advocate for accountability among WATSAN service providers and agencies. Through the reactivation of defunct users' groups and the establishment of community ownership, users' groups have been able to improve the effectiveness of projects and bring change to their communities.

To enhance project effectiveness, FEDWASUN has been careful to avoid activity and resource duplication. Of FEDWASUN's three

Figure 18: Case of project rehabilitation

Ownership makes a difference: A success story

In 1985, the late King Birendra of Nepal granted a drinking water supply project on the basis of collective demand, to the people of Makwanpurgadhi in Makwanpur District. The project was designed for a 20-year period and aimed to serve around 5,000 local people. Construction work on the project was completed in 1988, through a contractor, as per contemporary government policy. The Government established an office in the village to operate the project.

Local people were unaware about the project's planning, implementation, management and operation processes. Due to lack of financial resources, in 1993, the government merged its site office into the District Office. Despite supervision support, the service level of the project gradually decreased due to the absence of regular operations, maintenance mechanisms and ownership by the local people. By the fifth year of the project, most local people were again forced to use traditional water sources. In 1997, the ailing project was handed over to a users' committee by the Government. There were not enough financial resources within the committee to repair the project; however, they managed to partially operate the project until 2003.

The users' committee became a formal member of FEDWASUN in



« Reservoir tank



« Users' committee meeting

2003. FEDWASUN conducted a situation analysis of the project from the users' perspectives as an integral part of its Citizens' action programme. Based on its findings in the district, FEDWASUN started lobbying the project in different sectors to get the financial aid and technical support needed for the project's rehabilitation. After a series of attempts, the users' committee succeeded in incorporating the project in the annual plan of the District Development Committee (DDC). The DDC and VDC contributed the essential budget, which amounted to NRs.575,000, to rehabilitate the project. The users' committee planned, implemented, managed and monitored the entire project, and finally succeeded in rehabilitating the near-defunct project. They now have a functional users' committee; operation and maintenance funds; and, more importantly, they have increased ownership of the project among the people.

major programmes in 16 districts, none overlap in the same district.

FEDWASUN is pushing service providers to allocate sufficient capital funds for the maintenance and rehabilitation of assets to ensure that they remain in good working order. Due to FEDWASUN's advocacy for an increased WATSAN budget, there is a growing trend among service providers to increase funding in the sector. FEDWASUN has also taken initiatives to promote user-friendly policies and plan and enhance project effectiveness.

All of FEDWASUN's activities have contributed to the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals. In addition to Goal 7, which aims to reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation by 2015, FEDWASUN's activities have directly and indirectly impacted on development as a whole and, hence, contributed to poverty reduction. For example, the increased number of users' groups and community participation means that more and more schemes are being planned and implemented. This means that the time and energy previously used for carrying water can be reallocated to other activities, including livelihood activities. Access to drinking water and sanitation services also improves health, thereby decreasing school dropout rates and increasing productivity. It can also reduce child mortality rates and improve maternal health for expecting mothers. Through the construction of sanitation facilities, FEDWASUN has helped to reduce environmental contamination and improve environmental sustainability. FEDWASUN has also provided training for its district federations and users' groups on localising the Millennium Development Goals.

FEDWASUN has been continuously trying to improve its governance through different activities in its working districts. FEDWASUN's district-wise key achievements through citizens' action are summarised in the following table (Figure 19).

3.2 Lessons learned

FEDWASUN has gained vital and invaluable experience since its establishment. Key learnings are summarised as follows:

- ▶ Public hearings are an effective way to have face-to-face dialogue between service providers and users' groups. Public hearings make service providers more accountable and service providers are more willing to reveal information in a joint forum with the CDO, LDO, representatives from different organisations, users' group and media in attendance. There are many instances where the CDO has directly questioned the Chief of Drinking Water Division on the Division's activities.
- ▶ Radio programmes are effective tools for creating public awareness about water and sanitation rights, budgets, current activities and other issues.
- ▶ The formation of users' groups through formal processes alone does not make them responsible enough to handle WATSAN schemes. When users' groups are reinforced with different awareness raising activities, they understand their responsibilities and take ownership of the scheme. This helps toward project sustainability.
- ▶ For the effectiveness and sustainability of projects, it is

Figure 19: District wise achievements through Citizens' action programme

Districts	Achievements
Dhading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Lobbied CDO, LDO and Chief of Drinking Water Division to allocate funds for the re-operation of the Kumpur Drinking Water Scheme and was successful in obtaining NRs.50,000 for this purpose. ▶ Participated in District Council meeting and was able to lobby for water and sanitation budget for Silung VDC, which had not received any budget funds for the last five years. ▶ Successful in resolving the dispute over the Adimghat Bansetar Drinking Water Scheme between irrigators and drinking water users, and consequently brought the parties to a consensus to use the scheme for drinking water. ▶ FEDWASUN is a member of the Dhading District Water Resource Committee and Joint Evaluation Committee, which consists of representatives of the VDC, District Water Supply Division and FEDWASUN district chapter. ▶ Disseminated situation analysis report (10 schemes) and WATSAN budget to media people and concerned stakeholders. The report found WATSAN services to be minimal and also found that 7 VDCs in the district had no budget for water and sanitation. ▶ Conducted a successful radio programme on water and sanitation called Hamro Boli on Radio Dhading. ▶ Increased recognition and participation in district level activities.
Makwanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Reactivation of Makwanpurgadhi drinking water scheme, for which NRs.700,000 (increased from NRs.575,000) was allocated as a result of FEDWASUN's efforts. ▶ Disseminated situation analysis report (13 schemes) and WATSAN budget to media people and concerned stakeholders. The report found WATSAN services to be minimal and also found that 13 VDCs in the district had no budget for water and sanitation. ▶ Successful in making concerned stakeholders and government bodies commit to providing funds to the 19 underserved VDCs. ▶ Increased recognition and participation in district level activities.
Baglung	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Stakeholders expressed their commitment to unite and investigate the district's future needs in relation to water and sanitation; to prioritise sanitation issues; and to allocate budget funds to the VDCs that are presently excluded. ▶ Disseminated reports of situation analysis (10 schemes) and WATSAN budget to media people and concerned stakeholders. The report found WATSAN services to be minimal and also found that 19 VDCs in the district had no budget for water and sanitation. ▶ FEDWASUN is a member of the Baglung District Water Resource Committee. ▶ Increased recognition and participation in district level activities.
Pyuthan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Placed pressure on concerned stakeholders to re-survey the Dharmpani Integrated Water Supply Scheme and distribute water facilities to local people. As a result of this initiative 280 households benefited. ▶ FEDWASUN is a member of the Joint Monitoring Team, which consists of representatives from the VDC, the District Water Supply Division and FEDWASUN district chapter. ▶ Through the Public Hearing Programme, FEDWASUN was successful in capturing the attention of representatives from the 7 political parties, the LDO, CDO, Chief of Water Supply Division, NEWAH and the Fund Board, who all committed to avoiding resource duplication and finding ways to ensure the long-term sustainability of projects. ▶ FEDWASUN is in the process of analysing seven water supply and sanitation schemes in the district. ▶ Increased recognition and participation in district level activities.
Baitadi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ FEDWASUN is a member of the Baitadi District Water Resource Committee ▶ Successful in conducting a situation analysis of 10 schemes and disseminating the actual findings based on this research. ▶ Increased recognition and participation in district level activities.

Contd...

Districts	Achievements
Ilam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Successful in lobbying the Chief of Water Supply Division for the maintenance of Maichowk Khola Drinking Water Scheme, through which 180 people are receiving drinking water facilities. ▶ Disseminated reports of situation analysis (12 schemes) and WATSAN budget to media people and concerned stakeholders. The report found WATSAN services to be minimal and also found that 9 VDCs in the district had no budget for water and sanitation. ▶ FEDWASUN plans to develop Ilam as a model district in the water and sanitation sector. ▶ Successful in broadcasting a radio programme on water and sanitation from radio Ilam and in disseminating notices and news through local media. ▶ FEDWASUN is a member of Ilam District Water Resource Committee ▶ Increased recognition and participation in district level activities.
Baglung	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Stakeholders expressed their commitment to unite and investigate the district's future needs in relation to water and sanitation; to prioritise sanitation issues; and to allocate budget funds to the VDCs that are presently excluded. ▶ Disseminated reports of situation analysis (10 schemes) and WATSAN budget to media people and concerned stakeholders. The report found WATSAN services to be minimal and also found that 19 VDCs in the district had no budget for water and sanitation. ▶ FEDWASUN is a member of the Baglung District Water Resource Committee. ▶ Increased recognition and participation in district level activities.
Pyuthan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Placed pressure on concerned stakeholders to re-survey the Dharmpani Integrated Water Supply Scheme and distribute water facilities to local people. As a result of this initiative 280 households benefited. ▶ FEDWASUN is a member of the Joint Monitoring Team, which consists of representatives from the VDC, the District Water Supply Division and FEDWASUN district chapter. ▶ Through the Public Hearing Programme, FEDWASUN was successful in capturing the attention of representatives from the 7 political parties, the LDO, CDO, Chief of Water Supply Division, NEWAH and the Fund Board, who all committed to avoiding resource duplication and finding ways to ensure the long-term sustainability of projects. ▶ FEDWASUN is in the process of analysing seven water supply and sanitation schemes in the district. ▶ Increased recognition and participation in district level activities.
Baitadi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ FEDWASUN is a member of the Baitadi District Water Resource Committee ▶ Successful in conducting a situation analysis of 10 schemes and disseminating the actual findings based on this research. ▶ Increased recognition and participation in district level activities.
Ilam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Successful in lobbying the Chief of Water Supply Division for the maintenance of Maichowk Khola Drinking Water Scheme, through which 180 people are receiving drinking water facilities. ▶ Disseminated reports of situation analysis (12 schemes) and WATSAN budget to media people and concerned stakeholders. The report found WATSAN services to be minimal and also found that 9 VDCs in the district had no budget for water and sanitation. ▶ FEDWASUN plans to develop Ilam as a model district in the water and sanitation sector. ▶ Successful in broadcasting a radio programme on water and sanitation from radio Ilam and in disseminating notices and news through local media. ▶ FEDWASUN is a member of Ilam District Water Resource Committee ▶ Increased recognition and participation in district level activities.

necessary to periodically observe the performance of water and sanitation schemes. It is also necessary for donors to analyse whether or not project rehabilitation is more effective than construction of a new scheme before they invest money.

- » Constructing toilets in rural areas is not sufficient to improve sanitation conditions. It is also necessary to make villagers aware of the proper use of sanitation facilities. Due to lack of awareness, there are many examples where toilets have been used as rooms to store logs or grass.

- » There is a huge gap between water and sanitation coverage in Nepal. Sanitation services cannot be left behind; water and sanitation have to go together.
- » The influencing process at the policy-making level (e.g., National Planning Commission) must be very effective with continuous pressure, dialogue and follow up.
- » The huge participation of people in the lobbying process, such as the Signature Campaign to End Water Poverty helped to sensitise people, including children, as to water rights.
- » The capacity of women should not be undermined. Given the responsibility and opportunity, women can be equally as efficient as men.
- » Even though there are many attempts at social transformation, caste discrimination is still rooted in our society. Some so-called 'upper class' people still think that they will not be accepted in their social group if they drink water in the house of a so-called 'untouchable'.

4 Future direction

FEDWSUN has been playing a crucial role in transforming WATSAN governance in Nepal. It has also become well recognised by many organisations nationally and internationally in a very short period of time. Still, it is in need of organisational strengthening. It can take years to achieve good governance in the WATSAN sector, because different stakeholders and groups in society need to negotiate how things are done and how resources are allocated. There are many challenges ahead, but these challenges will also create opportunities. This is the right time for FEDWASUN to plan its future and convert challenges into opportunities.

4.1 Challenges

FEDWASUN faces the following challenges:

- » Lack of integrated plan in Nepal to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate water and sanitation schemes
- » The Government's lack of engagement with FEDWASUN
- » Difficulty resolving disputes due to lack of implementation of laws in Nepal
- » Difficulty in decentralising the budget in the water and sanitation sector
- » Lack of access for poor and marginalised people to water and sanitation schemes
- » Lack of consensus between users' groups and contractors as to the smooth construction of WATSAN schemes
- » Lack of solidarity among users' group to resolve WATSAN issues
- » Lack of financial and human resources to operate programmes efficiently in all districts
- » Lack of awareness and lack of capacity among users' groups in relation to understanding recent

national and international WATSAN issues, changing legal provisions and red book analysis

- » Need to expand FEDWASUN's chapters to remote and disadvantaged areas to secure water and sanitation rights

4.2 Opportunities

FEDWASUN is in a strong position to:

- » Be a leading organisation in the provision of sustainable development in the water and sanitation sector in Nepal
- » Advocate for deprived groups
- » Mediate between different stakeholders and service providers
- » Facilitate the planning process by revealing ground realities
- » Lobby for user friendly policies, practical plans and programmes
- » Facilitate an end to the duplication of work by initiating dialogue
- » Communicate to the world the realities and conditions of water and sanitation issues in Nepal
- » Create networks with national and international organisations to bring more WATSAN schemes to communities

4.3 Future strategy

To realise its vision, mission and goal, FEDWASUN will:

- » Coordinate with different organisations to work effectively in policy-making, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of WATSAN schemes
- » Promote good governance in the WATSAN sector and awareness raising through networking and inter-organisational linkages
- » Publicise the Federation's goal, objectives and achievements, and work in coordination with other organisations
- » Advocate for users' groups' issues and problems by representing at the national and international level
- » Critically review its institutional development process, formulate clear policies and action plans, and implement them accordingly
- » Give priority to conducting situation analyses, awareness raising and advocacy in the water and sanitation sector
- » Analyse its achievements and communicate its success stories through the media
- » Work towards the expansion of its district chapters to all districts of Nepal and the extension of assistance in helping to form more users' groups
- » Develop Dhading as a model district for Citizens' Action and replicate its good practices in other districts
- » Focus on implementing the people's agenda, as declared through the Citizens' Action process in the past
- » Conduct different programmes, directly through the central Federation, and also through the district branches and users' groups, as well as strengthen institutional development, management, advocacy and good governance

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